The Congregationalist

IN THIS ISSUE

"A REFORMED AND CATHOLIC CHURCH"(?)

Comments on the Blake-Pike Proposals

by

Two Lay Members and Two Ministers

Pages 6, 7 and 8

Courtesy All-Year Club of Southern California

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galations 5:1

VOLUME 4 FEBRUARY 1961 NUMBER 2

THE MISSIONARY COLUMN

The Missionary Society deals with two kinds of "projects". It sends money to those missionaries or projects which the donors specify. It also sends money to missionaries and projects which the Directors, after careful study, approve. Readers may be interested to know what these are.

Projects aided out of the General Fund, by vote of the Directors, in 1960 were: Anaheim, California, Community Congregational Church; Church of our Saviour, Granada Hills, California; Faith Community Church, North Royalton, Ohio; Pine Hill Congregational Church, West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan; Pullman, Michigan, Congregational Church; brought Congregational minister from Ireland to Riceville, Iowa, Church; Rev. Russell Jay, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa; Mayfair Church, Toledo, Ohio; Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia; Pilgrim Fathers Memorial Church, London, England; Hong Kong and Formosa refugee evangelistic work; South India: Rev. Olli H. Jokisaari, erection of residence, aid to struggling Churches; North India, native evangelist at Darjeeling.

The list of designated projects is a long one, including several that are aided out of the General Fund. We cannot name them all here. The following are typical, covering the home and foreign mission field: Angola, West Africa; Ahmednagar College, India; Anatolia College, Greece; Medical Aid to China; Kobe College, Japan; Near East Foundation; Doshisha University, Japan; Philippine Federation of Christian Churches; Lady Doak College, India; Seminaries in America, such as Bangor, Hartford, Chicago, Berkeley, Andover, Garrett; College Cevenol, France; World Neighbors, Inc., (India, etc.); Frank Laubach Literacy Campaign; Albert Schweitzer Fellowship; Ryder Memorial Hospital, Puerto Rico; Anchorage, Alaska, Church (organized August 17, 1960); Northland College, Wisconsin; Relief and Reconstruction, Arab Relief, S. O. S., etc.; CARE; Recording for the Blind; The Ten Dollar Club for Starting New Churches.

The Directors hope for an increase in the number and amount of gifts to the General Fund for our expanding program, especially the new Churches program. Remittances should be sent to Howell D. Davies, Treasurer, Room 2308, 100 North LaSalle St., Chicago 2, Ill.

Congregational Bookshelf

Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles, California

Professor Alfred North Whitehead of Cambridge University in England and Harvard in America is one of a half dozen philosophers of first rank in our generation. After a conference with American Congregationalist clergymen he praised them as superior to the faculty he knew and respected, according to dialogues printed in a paperback edition.

This commendation is especially significant because it comes from a major philosopher of the liberal Episcopal persuasion. Whitehead was always trying to relate the newest findings of science with the best of Christian theology. Congregationalists have often been pioneers in this field. We therefore welcome a new edition of his major work *Process and Reality*.

Laymen are advised to begin this book by reading the first and last chapters. Those in between are technical treatises of primary value for professors well trained in the discipline and vocabulary of contemporary thought of the most refined sort. Here is a defense of the existence and power of God which many compare with that developed by Thomas Aquinas in the Middle Ages. What even ordinary readers should appreciate is that the highest thought of our times leads directly to faith in God.

Those who are impressed with Whitehead's ideas on religion should turn to further expositions of his thought, now available in paperback editions. With careful reading of these more popular books, readers may well turn to his major and detailed explanations which *Process and Reality* provides. Belief in God is actually at the heart of the best of modern life and militant atheism is restricted almost wholly to the backwash of Western thinking and the totalitarian thought control of the Soviet Union.

A. N. Whitehead, PROCESS AND REALITY, Macmillan Co., $6.50.

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MINNESOTANS DISCUSS CONSTITUTION

Rev. Lorenzo S. Todd, Bayport, Minnesota

On Tuesday evening, November 29, about 800 people gathered in the ballroom of the Calhoun Beach Hotel, Minneapolis, to hear a presentation of the facts on both sides of the merger controversy. The speaker in favor of the merger was Mr. George B. Hastings, prominent Nebraska attorney, former Moderator of the General Council and a member of the Board of Home Missions. The Pro-Congregational speaker was the Rev. Henry David Gray, Pastor of South Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut. Each man is eminently qualified to defend his position. The Moderator for this meeting was the Honorable Clark MacGregor, Congressman-elect from the Third Minnesota District, an active Congregationalist. This was the first time that Minnesota Congregationalists have had an opportunity to hear the issues of the proposed merger adequately presented and debated.

The initial speaker was Mr. Hastings. He presented an extensive history of the merger proceedings and of the hard, careful work expended on the writing of the proposed Constitution. The theme of his address was trust and the "scandal of a divided Protestantism." He stressed the crying need for Congregationalists to lead the way in "healing the broken body of Christ." He emphasized the famous Par. 21 and stressed it as a positive guarantee that though something is taking place nothing is going to happen. "It is an absolute guarantee that the rights and practices of Congregationalism will always be maintained for it includes the clause making absolute its perpetual continuance."

Impotent Guarantees

In his reply Dr. Gray pointed out the many provisions which already render Par. 21 impotent to fulfill its intended purpose, citing Pars. 20 and 22. He then reminded that the Churches would have no vote on the By-Laws which are the implementation of the Constitution.

Dr. Gray also went into some of the history of the proposed merger. He reminded us that Par. 21 had been presented as a Bill of Rights to General Council officials at Omaha in 1956 where it was thrown out. It was Dr. Gray's contention that this Bill of Rights is all that is needed to make such a merger practicable. He called the proposed Constitution merely a law book, which could be interpreted and maneuvered as those in positions of authority might see fit.

Registration of attendance was not taken but it is estimated that twenty-five Churches were represented. There was a period of questions and answers. Most of the questions were addressed to Mr. Hastings. The most significant question was: "We have heard of all the things we are not going to lose by this merger, what are we going to gain by it?" No adequate answer was supplied.

A tape of this debate was made and is available from the Committee to Keep Minnesota Congregational, c/o A. W. McMillan, Wesley Temple Building, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

OUR DEVOTIONAL COLUMN

Rev. Carl M. Gates, Claremont, California

Theme for the Month:
"The Dangerous Edge of Things"
Suggested Reading: Philippians 4:4-13

It is hard today to keep up with the news and still maintain a spirit that is cool and quiet and confident. In spite of the universal longing for peace, threats to peace multiply on every hand. How can one be realistic and at the same time optimistic?

The Bible gives the answer. "Biblical religion," scholars tell us, "was born and reared on that 'dangerous edge of things' where human existence faced extinction. . . . The great prophetic leaders arose at a time when the Hebrews were in the midst of the breakdown of their civilization." In the Psalmist's phrase, they were at their wits' end — helpless by themselves and with no one else to turn to but God. Isaiah's experience is a good illustration. In the account of his call (Isaiah 6) he says: "In the day that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord, high and lifted up." Uzziah was the young man's hero; the nation's collapse had begun. Isaiah was utterly discouraged. But it was then that he saw the Lord in all his greatness and power.

"Religion is born," according to John Buchan, "when we accept the ultimate frustration of mere human effort, and at the same time realize the strength which comes from union with superhuman reality." Self-complacency is the great barrier to a vital religious faith, and when that is broken down by some overwhelming disaster or danger the door of the heart is open, so that God can enter with His life-giving Spirit of unshakable confidence. The danger of which one had been afraid is now seen to be a new revelation of invincible and eternal realities.

But there is no assurance of material prosperity. Isaiah's new courage came with a sense of the glorious greatness of God which was so over-powering that earthly happiness ceased to be the chief end of life. "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" God asked. "Here am I, send me," was Isaiah's answer.

Perhaps as the human foundations of our life are being shaken, we may gain, as the prophets of old gained, a new perspective, through which we too shall see more clearly what is supremely important. "God ain't dead yet," and when we put our trust in him, we too can believe in the future because we believe in him. *Prayer:* "O God, who art, and wast, and art to come, before whose face the generations rise and pass away, age after age the living seek Thee and find that of Thy faithfulness there is no end. Our fathers in their pilgrimage walked by Thy guidance, and rested on Thy compassion. Still to their children be Thou the cloud by day, and the fire by night. Where but in Thee have we a covert from the storm, or shadow from the heat of life? . . . O Thou sole Source of Peace and Righteousness, take now the veil from every heart, and join us in one communion with Thy prophets and saints who have trusted in Thee and were not ashamed. Not of our worthiness, but of Thy tender mercy hear our prayer; for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord. Amen. (James Martineau)

WOMEN'S WORK

MRS. ROBERT E. COLLINS, Chairman
1014 FLORAL DRIVE, S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

"Where the Need is . . ."

Implementing the philosophy of our Commission on Women's Work that "where the need is, our mission is," our Congregational churchwomen engage in a variety of tasks. We bring you two examples this month.

The Women's Missionary Society of First Congregational, Tarentum, Pennsylvania, was concerned for the education of free church ministers in the face of constant and severe pressure by pro-merger advocates. Their response to this recognized need was the establishment of a scholarship fund for the training of a Congregational minister, providing for regular reports to the Society so that the inspiration and interest which this personal contact ensures may be realized.

In Greeneville Congregational Church, Norwich, Connecticut, the enthusiasm and devotion of its women — of Mrs. Florence Prentice, in particular — was enlisted to transform waste to usefulness. The old church bell which had lain "cracked and useless" since it fell with the church steeple in a hurricane in 1938 could be made to serve again . . . in the form of 300 chrome-plated dinner bells inscribed with moulded letters. The help of women was *needed* to bring "a bit of the auld bell" into the homes of members and freedom loving friends. An imaginative solution which will help to restore this lovely church!

Mid-Winter Trip

A "rocking-chair" trip in the dead of winter can take you many places. It might be by way of a loaning library shelf — or a series of reviews at circle meetings or association meeting. However you decide to make the "trip" available, it will provide inspiration and understanding, and may stimulate you to see some hitherto unrecognized need where you are that you can fill — or share in — with a custom-tailored missions program.

Missionary "Shorts"

We bring you brief reviews of current books which will help to bring the far world nearer:

Wilson, Dorothy Clarke: *Dr. Ida, the Story of Dr. Ida of Vellore;* McGraw-Hill, 1959. $5.95.
One of the great medical missionaries of all time is the genius behind the vast medical center at Vellore, India, and one of the outstanding gynecological surgeons of the age. She battled taboos and tragic ignorance to establish decent medical care for women. Filled with thrilling tales of Indian life and customs and human interest stories.

O'Brien, Brian: *She Had a Magic;* Dutton, 1959. $4.00.
Mary Slessor, daughter of an impoverished Scots shoemaker, was sent to Africa by the United Presbyterian Church to join Scottish Mission at Calabar and served in the savage West African bush country for almost 40 years. Through her Christian teachings she won the love and respect of the many tribes, endured all sorts of dangers, saved bodies as well as souls, improved trade relations between the natives and the British, and paved the way for women in the mission field.

Vining, Elizabeth Gray: *Return to Japan;* Lippincott, 1960. $4.50.
Her account of two visits to Japan, since she was tutor to Crown Prince Akihito from 1946-1950 (*Windows for the Crown Prince.*) She attended the P.E.N. Congress in Tokyo in 1957, renewing friendships, and her second visit took her back to attend the wedding of the Crown Prince — the only foreign guest. A delightful account of a Japan the author knows and loves well.

Bartholomew, Carol: *My Heart has Seventeen Rooms;* Macmillan, 1959. $3.50.
In 1954, with her 3 small boys, the author accompanied her husband to North India, where for 2½ years he worked as engineer on the Bhakra Dam. Her journal records her observations and experiences, particularly her life in the 17 room district hospital where she served as nurse and counselor. One family's experiences, charming, humorous, truly heart-warming.

Hobart, Alice Tisdale: *Gusty's Child;* Longmans, 1959.
An account of experiences in China just before and after the First World War, as the wife of an oil company representative living there in a period when a medieval society was shifting to an industrial one. (Somewhat a sequel to *Oil for the Lamps of China,* 1933.) Covers the changing pattern of world politics in China and abroad, and has some breath-taking episodes in her escape from Nanking and return to America.

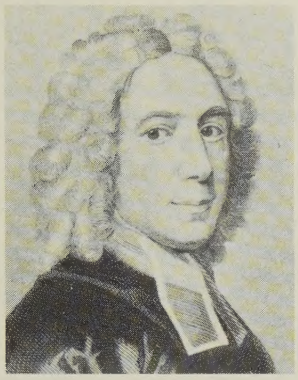
Caulfield, Genevieve: *The Kingdom Within;* Harper, 1960. $4.00.
Blind from infancy due to a tragic household accident, this gallant, indomitable woman made her tragic handicap a power for good in the world. She attended Perkins Institute for the Blind, and later Trinity College in Washington. In her 17th year, disturbed by the discriminatory laws against the Japanese, she determined to go to the Orient and work for closer understanding with the Asian people. She taught English, and adopted a Japanese daughter whom she brought to America for an education. Together they went to Bangkok and founded a school for the blind teaching both Braille and English. A wonderful account of the missionary devotion of a great woman. Although Catholic, the book is a story of devotion to the blind and not basically a religious treatise.

FAMOUS CONGREGATIONALISTS

Arvel M. Steece, Ph.D., Old Saybrook, Connecticut

1674 ISAAC WATTS 1748

Isaac Watts was born at Southampton, England, July 17, 1674 and died at London, November 25, 1748. He was educated at Thomas Rowe's Academy at Stoke-Newington. The universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen awarded him the D.D. in 1728. From 1699-1701 he was assistant at the Mark Lane Congregational Church. From 1702 until the end of his life he remained minister there, but after 1713 he had a colleague who assumed most of the pastoral responsibilities.



Isaac Watts was the father of modern English hymnody. He won the English from psalm-singing to hymn-singing. He wrote 697 hymns ranging from religious doggerel to some of the most majestic poetry in the language. Among the great hymns that are perennial favorites one finds "Our God Our Help in Ages Past," "Joy to the World," "Come Holy Spirit Heavenly Dove," "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

While Watts is remembered today chiefly for a few great hymns, he was very influential in his own generation not only as a hymn writer but as the author of devotional literature for children, a poet, and a contributor to the religious thought of his time. He sought a reconciliation of religion and poetry. As an educator he wrote a number of books that were widely used by students. As a religious leader he wrote against the Deists and yet his own orthodoxy was of such a mild sort that Unitarians frequently sought to claim him. His sermons and devotional books were read by many Non-conformists. As a philanthropist he was a member of both the Coward Trust and the Congregational Fund board. He was interested in New England: sending books to the libraries of Harvard and Yale, securing donors for Harvard and acting as trustee for two of that school's important funds. His chief American correspondents were Benjamin Coleman, Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards.

Among Watts' works are: *Horae Lyricae* (1706), *Hymns and Spiritual Songs . . .* (1707), *A Guide to Prayer . . .* (1715), *Divine Songs attempted in Easy Language for the use of Children* (1715), *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Applied to the Christian State and Worship* (1719), *The Art of Reading and Writing English . . .* (1721), *Logic . . .* (1724), *Catechisms . . .* (1730), *The Improvement of the Mind . . .* (1741), *Orthodoxy and Charity United . . .* (1745).

The modern biography is Davis, Arthur Paul. *Isaac Watts, His Life and Works.* New York: Dryden Press, 1943.

(Photo reproduced by John G. Towns, Holbrook, Mass.)

FROM AN IOWA LAYMAN'S CORNER

Paul C. Miller, Charles City, Iowa

The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and THE CONGREGATIONALIST are the custodians of our fellowship. Now an opportunity is offered to all to promote the continuation of the Congregational Way of Life in our respective Church fellowships. How do your Church, your Association, and your State Conference stand in regard to the United Church of Christ? Of the total number of Congregational Christian members, only 14.6% voted for the merger. What are YOU doing about the 85.4% who did not vote, or who voted against the merger in 1948?

Here is a large field with an untapped potentiality that must be sold on continuing the Congregational Way of Life. We are now in the most crucial time in the life of our fellowship. This job of salesmanship is not going to be accomplished by any number of written sermons by a select few ministers. This is a job for the laity who understand the use and the value of facts and will use them. If sermons are the best approach in selling a product, why has not industry employed many ministers? Before industry ventures into foreign markets it has done a good job of selling its product first here at home. It has made use of the names of every potential buyer, even those who never expressed any interest in the product.

A Double Standard

The merger advocates not only have but believe in a double standard of ethics. This was plainly demonstrated when the General Council disregarded the rule it had established for closing the voting on the merger with the 1948 General Council Meeting. They approve of any action employed, regardless of method, when it is done in the name of the church and serves their purpose. This was demonstrated by extending the voting time rather than accepting defeat.

Par. 21, "The Local Church", is only a pacifier for the benefit of the true Congregationalist. This will, more than likely, be one of the first articles to be deleted by the General Synod when they start the work of amending *their* Constitution. How can we trust those who fail to have respect for sound moral principles?

The penalty we will pay for being indifferent to the United Church of Christ is to be ruled by a Protestant-type Vatican Hierarchy. Now let us all work to sell our product, The Congregational Way of Life. It is not WHO is right but WHAT is right that is important in voting NO on this Constitutional issue.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Harry R. Butman, D.D., Los Angeles, California

I begin by suggesting, not without irony, that Congregationalists should look kindly upon Dr. Blake's proposal for a "Reformed and Catholic Church." Such a church would be much freer than the one proposed by perhaps the most uncompromisingly ecumenical and quietly powerful man in our denomination, Dr. Truman Douglass. Dr. Douglass rejects Dr. Blake's merger idea as not being "churchly" enough. Together with Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, he proposed to the Message Committee of the National Council of Churches of Christ at the San Francisco Assembly, that the National Council be altered into a "Super Church" which would have the power "to ordain clergymen, administer the sacraments, and accept individual members and denominations into its ranks." Bluntly, Dr. Douglass would change American Protestantism into the One Great Church.

This proposal comes as no surprise to those who have long fought for the Free Church idea. Years ago Dr. Douglass said that the future church would have to have some form of episcopacy. He is an advocate of the "Una Sancta" theory of the church; he was one of the proponents of the "Greenwich Plan", which, as long ago as 1950, was proposing a "Super Church" for American Protestantism.

In an early issue of the FREE LANCE, predecessor to THE CONGREGATIONALIST, I reported a meeting which I attended at Buck Hill Falls, at which many church leaders, including Drs. Douglas Horton and Charles Merrill, debated whether the "Greenwich Plan" or Dr. Stanley Jones' "Federal Union" should be the long range master plan to make American Protestantism structurally unified. The mood of the meeting was against Dr. Jones: he would have left too much sovereignty, too much autonomy, in the several denominations.

Strange Leadership

It is ironic that Congregationalism, a Free Church fellowship, has placed in positions of leadership, honor, and power, men who do not deeply love the Free Church idea. The damage done by such men in the holy name of ecumenicity is great. One such evil is intellectual corruption, and of such I cite but a single instance; the topsy-turvy semantic process which has been applied to the word "Congregationalism." In George Orwell's frightening novel, "1984", the totalitarian rulers of England, in order to keep men from subversive thoughts, altered or abolished the words by which such thoughts could be expressed. Heretics then had no vocabulary by which heresy could be preached. With subtlety and political craft our former leaders and their adherents have kept the word "Congregational", but have filled it with such alien meaning that it can no longer carry the idea of a free and autonomous Church, linked in fellowship with sister Churches.

The sound, precise, historic distinctions between Congregationalism and Presbyterianism have first been blurred, and will soon be forgotten by the majority. Congregationalism, in the looking-glass world of ecumenicity, means exactly what leadership says it means at the moment they say it: at a later time it can be declared that true Congregationalism is to be a vestigial remnant in the body of the One Great Church.

A Prophecy

My prophecy in this matter is that the Super Church views of Dr. Douglass and others should not be lightly dismissed, even though their proposal was rejected at San Francisco. There is a powerful and determined element in American officialdom which is not content with the conciliar concept of merger advocated by Dr. Blake in his sermon. Let it be remembered that the session which repudiated the Super Church idea was described by the press as "stormy and closed-door." There is a dynamic of compulsive conformity working for the "Una Sancta" advocates, and they have the tremendous propaganda advantages of a clear-cut ideological absolutism. And if they do not immediately succeed in bringing about the Super Church, they will do much to diminish freedom by making the "Reformed and Catholic Church" seem so modest and reasonable a proposal in contrast with their radical plans that indifferent men, with no tradition of liberty, will embrace the "Reformed and Catholic Church."

From a merely human standpoint, there are evil days ahead for those churches which love the freedom and simplicity of Christ's Gospel, which certainly has no plans for a Super Church. But there was a time, the wisest of Books tells us, when men sought total unity, became one, and reared a tall symbolic tower. But God halted the building of Babel, token of human arrogance and pride, and scattered the people. God may again grow tired of great structures.

UNION DOES NOT GUARANTEE GROWTH

(A Report on the United Church of Canada)

"Retiring moderator Dr. Angus J. MacQueen pointed to the United Church weaknesses which are reflected in need for renewed zeal for missions and church reunion, as well as a revitalized spiritual life. Following church union in 1925 there was a surplus of ministers, but now a severe shortage of ministerial candidates has reached emergency proportions, according to one educator, and not only among French Canadians. Church growth is lagging well behind the nation's population increase. Every conference showed a drop in new members by profession of faith. Four-fifths of all money raised remains within the congregational treasury — 'a shocking proof of self-centeredness,' charges Dr. MacQueen. Remarked one minister who had transferred from another church five years earlier: 'This is a fascinating church to work in but it's a sleeping giant.' "

From CHRISTIANITY TODAY, October 24, 1960, Quoted by Permission.

CHURCH UNION AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Carolyn T. Abbot, Westford, Massachusetts

The proposal to create the Reformed and Catholic Church by uniting Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Methodist Churches with the United Church of Christ is startling. If the new plan of union should follow the pattern of the United Church of Christ, the new denomination could, without the consent of the local churches, join with United Churches of Christ abroad to form a world Church. The Report of the Committee on Free Church Polity and Unity as presented to the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches in 1954 shows that Congregationalism has been lost in the United Church of Christ established in other countries.

Proponents of a united Protestant Church assert that denominations are abhorrent and divisive and that they fragmentize the body of Christ. The truth is that denominations have been the natural outgrowth of religious freedom. Through them we have had the opportunity to enjoy freedom of worship, freedom of inquiry, voluntary fellowship, voluntary consultation, the expression of a variety of opinion, and separation from error. The body of Christ is the great company of believers, each with personal talents. How could we, ministers and laymen, give of ourselves as God made us if we were poured into one mould?

Advocates of union say that cooperation and spiritual unity are not enough, — that the complete organic union of churches and denominations is necessary for Christians to witness to unity in a world of disorder. A publication of the National Council of Churches of Christ entitled "Christian Responsibility on a Changing Planet," a report of the Fifth World Order Conference, states on page 54: "Beginning at the parish level, it is necessary to cultivate a new understanding of, and a sensitivity to, the international implications of national actions, and a new willingness to delegate sovereignty in specified areas to international authority." Perhaps this is the key to the purpose of a world church. Member churches and denominations, by giving up their sovereignty, would be said to witness to the fact that nations, too, should surrender sovereignty and be placed under one international government. I am certain that Christianity would not benefit from the organic union of churches and denominations on a large scale, nor from the submerging of free principles, and I am confident that ways can be found for nations to solve intricate problems without relinquishing their sovereignty.

Governed by the Experts

A careful study of reports, articles, and books on the subject of church union leads me to believe that one principle of a United Protestant Church would be that the collective mind of experts in the realm of religion should be relied upon in the reaching of decisions of a controversial or complex nature. The opinion of leading churchmen would serve as a collective conscience to guide the millions of constituents. Governments, too, would be expected to listen to this "voice" of the Church. Freedom to choose and act independently would not be condoned.

I suggest that a corporate united church which claimed to continue the former identity of the member denominations within its structure would be a collective church. Such a denomination would be in the position of a "primary" or dominant denomination, and member churches and denominations would be in a "secondary" or subordinate position. This subordination of one denomination to another would not be compatible with religious freedom. Thus, it seems reasonable to maintain that, since the United Church of Christ is a corporate Church, a Congregational Christian Church which joined it could no longer claim to be a Congregational Church. It would be a local church of the United Church of Christ. A Congregational Church could not be in a subordinate position to the United Church of Christ. The Congregational Churches which determined to remain faithful to the original principles and practices of those Churches would compose the continuing denomination of Congregational Christian Churches.

The End of Freedom

It does not seem probable to me that religious freedom would survive in a corporate united church which fused the denominations in the new body, nor in a federation of denominations under one government. In both cases, considerable control could be exercised over the united body, and huge sums of money would be channeled into one missionary and one educational program.

Churches and denominations can work together without surrendering either their sovereignty or their identity in associations and organizations devised for fellowship, inspiration, and cooperation but with no authority to govern the member churches and denominations.

Denominations have blossomed on the tree of Christianity. What would be the advantage of cutting off the branches? Rather, let them bear fruit.

MORE CHURCHES VOTE "NO"

Since our last issue, reports have come in of the following Churches voting against joining the United Church of Christ: Connecticut, Hartford, South; Illinois, Ontario and Wataga, Maine, Denmark, Machias (Center) and Marshfield; Massachusetts, West Medway, Second; Michigan, Pontiac; Minnesota, Duluth, Pilgrim; New Hampshire, Derry, Central.

(The Editor of THE CONGREGATIONALIST requests that pastors, clerks, or other responsible members of Churches which vote against joining the United Church of Christ, or which decide not to vote at all on the question, should report it as soon as possible to him at 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts, so that it may be listed in these columns.)

SPIRITUAL OR ORGANIC UNITY?

John W. Claxton, D.D., Plymouth Church, Lansing, Michigan

What the San Francisco pronouncements say, in substance, is that the church must be organizationally unified to accomplish Christ's mission. However, the real business of the church is not the buttressing of its own structure. It is the proclamation of the Gospel. For the doing of this what is supremely needed is the spirit of unity among Christians, the conviction that they share a common Lord, regardless of their diverse languages, cultures, or denominational ties.

The business of the church is not to dissipate her energies in trying to compel outward conformities among the followers of Christ, or to organize herself so that she can impress the world by her size and power. This has always been one of the subtle temptations that has confronted the church, and too often the followers of Christ have not been able to resist it.

In one of these periods when the church had achieved an outward unitedness, and with it wealth and power, it was remarked — "No longer can the church say, 'Silver and gold have I none,' but neither can it say, 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk.' "

The foremost concern of the church today ought to be that she shall be able to say "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." If the church should lose this ability she will have lost everything worth having, no matter what other wealth she may possess.

If the church continues to be able to say this, her power to do so will not derive from outward union but from the deeper union of the spirit, from the increasing conviction that despite the many things which, on the surface, seem to separate Christians, in the things that matter they are one, and are really working in a common cause.

Words of Wisdom

Let it not be overlooked that in the week that San Francisco was heard from some important Christian history was made in another part of the world. The Archbishop of Canterbury made a friendly call on the Pope. You have read the reports of their meeting. But you may not have read that on the night before the visit the Archbishop set forth his hopes and views in a sermon. He spoke of the long separation that has characterized Christ's church. He referred to this as a "cold war" in which there has been "a strife for victory, for converts, for political power in many countries with victims and martyrdoms and cruelties and oppressions."

Then he added — "We no longer need forbid one another. For if we are not against one another any longer, we are for one another, and so can be gloriously free to be altogether for Christ and for the true unity of His church. I say deliberately 'unity' not 'union', for church union, or reunion, rests upon a reconciliation of jurisdictions, and authorities. But unity is only of the spirit, and into that spirit the churches can enter readily, and are indeed entering now."

This is the true unity that we need in the church today. This is the unity which Christ had in mind when he prayed that they "all may be one." But if we insist on having outward structural union instead, which can never be realized except by coercions, divisions, and injury to man's spirit, then we can be assured that Christ will turn to those outside the church for the accomplishment of his mission.

CONGREGATIONALISM IN SOUTH INDIA

Norman S. McKendrick, Exeter, New Hampshire

On December 11, 1960, the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE reported that "Churchmen show feeling of unity." Mention was made of Bishop Newbigin, as a Bishop of the Church of South India, "a 1947 merger of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and *Congregationalists.*"

Are there Congregationalists in this church? Its Constitution, II, 8, said "The Church of South India recognizes that Episcopal, Presbyterial, and *Congregational* elements must all have their place in its order of life." And this church has often been acclaimed in the United States as an example of Congregationalists merging with other communions in an *organic* union.

In the FREE LANCE of November, 1951, I reported on a study of the Constitution of this church, a copy of which was loaned by Rev. Harry Butman, then pastor of the Allin Church of Dedham, Massachusetts. His church, with members of other churches, including myself, had been in close contact with the local churches in Travancore, South India, that were struggling to maintain their freedom as Congregational Churches against the Church of South India.

Congregationalism Obliterated

In this 1951 report, I said, after a prolonged and thorough search, line by line, at two different times, to make sure of its accuracy before it appeared in print, that "nowhere in the church's Basis of Union or its Constitution can be found the two essential principles of Congregationalism, the autonomy of the local church and the fellowship of the churches, and that the requirements for membership and service are such that no *true* Congregationalist can meet them without sacrificing the freedom for which his churches have stood for over three centuries." Certain provisions are most repulsive, especially those which fetter a man's conscience and require him *to accept in advance whatever the Synod may in the future announce* to be the will of God. No Congregationalist would agree to this. Therefore there can *be none* in the Church of South India.

A group of churches in Travancore formed the Travancore Church Council to defend their Congre-

(*Continued on bottom page* 9)

THE OBLIGATION OF THE LOYAL CONGREGATIONALIST

Rev. Arthur A. Rouner, Jr., Newton, Massachusetts

This short article is offered to THE CONGREGATIONALIST hopefully as a word in love to a group of my brethren in the Congregational Way whom I sincerely respect, and have learned to love. It is a word of dissent. For some time I believe it has needed to be spoken.

A course of action for individual Congregationalists in relation to the United Church of Christ has been stated by implication several times, but never more explicitly than in the November issue of this paper under the title "The Plight of the Loyal Congregationalist." This view, offered increasingly among those opposed to the United Church of Christ, is that a loyal Congregationalist, finding after his best efforts at dissuasion, that his local church was about to enter the United Church, has then the right to claim himself and his fellow-members who share his view as the continuing Congregational Church in that place, and as such to demand the Church's records, and then go on to "claim the property of the Church, its house of worship, its parsonage, and invested funds and . . . reasonably expect that the court will support their claim."

An Inconsistent Position

That we should come to this, who have so long feared merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church precisely on the grounds that our right to own and control our own property and funds might be jeopardized! Are we who feared Evangelical and Reformed designs upon our property now to turn 'round and take it from our fellow Congregationalists? Is there no point in all this controversy at which we of the opposition are going to have grace enough to accept that a decision has gone against us and to search our hearts for a moment to see if, as honestly as we can, we are following the leading of Christ's Holy Spirit? I ask these questions because I believe that if we accept this view we have seriously misunderstood the central meaning of our tradition.

Our fathers won for us a way of church life which they believed to be of the essence of New Testament Christianity. They saw the Church of Christ to be manifested most truly in visible, "gathered" Churches which had been called into being by Christ and which found their whole being and purpose in the fact of Christ's presence in their midst and of His love binding them to Him and to each other.

Congregational, Not Individual

As our name, "congregational," implies, it was the congregation, the local Church, the fellowship of believers who were conceived to be the most distinctive unit in the life of Christ's whole Church — *not* the individual.

"Where two or three are *gathered together* in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This was their watchword: that Christ was most powerfully present when they were "gathered together," when they were together seeking to know His will and to do it, when together they were growing in love for one another and for their Lord.

The Covenant is not nearly as much an agreement to be Congregationalists, as it is an agreement to "be kindly affectioned one toward another," and to "walk together in the ways of the Lord known and to be made known unto us," to love our common Lord, and to seek His will and not our own.

Our covenant commitment is doing whatever we do *together*. It is an agreement to bind ourselves to each other — to stand with our covenant-brothers come what may: to unite, or dissent, or what have you — but to do it together, to allow nothing to disrupt or destroy this sacred fellowship which Christ has created.

Congregationalism was never meant to be individualism, but congregationalism! Our calling is to follow Christ's will — not our own will. And our fathers' belief was that Christ makes His will known most surely in the congregation — in that one place where Christian brethren gather regularly in love to worship God, to share the sacraments, to hear God's word in Bible and sermon, and by discussion and prayer in Church Meeting to act on that word, together. To bring suit against one's own covenant brothers, members of the same Christian fellowship, the same congregation, is to destroy the body of Christ indeed, and to deny the heritage held most dearly among us.

I plead with my Congregational brethren to pray long and think deeply before ever taking this step that would throw doubt upon our integrity and destroy our greatest witness.

(*Continued from page* 8)

gational freedom against that Church. In 1951, Bishop Legg of the Church of South India appointed a pastor to the Church of Kadamalakuntu, one of that group. Members of the church resisted. The pastor, supported by the Bishop, brought suit to take the church property. The local Court of Nagercoil ruled in favor of the pastor. The church appealed to the High Court of Travancore, which reversed the decision and ruled for the local Church.

The Court Decision

I have before me the full text of both decisions. In THE FREE LANCE of October, 1953, I summarized the 88 typed pages of the High Court's decision: (I quote from the text of the decision) — "It is significant that the local Churches were not called on to vote upon the Scheme of Union" . . . "The adoption of the episcopal form of government in the Scheme of Union amounts to a *deviation* of a fundamental character from the principles of the London Missionary Churches in Travancore." . . . "The *local Church is not part of the Church of South India* and the appointment of the pastor by the Bishop is invalid." . . . On page 34 of the Scheme of Union is a curious church pledge, which led the counsel for the local Church to argue that, "It cannot be said that there has been a real union of the churches in this case, or that the Church of South India is a church in the true sense." The Court said, "We are of the opinion that there is great force in this argument."

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

Miss Marilyn Heaney, *Secretary*
Box 1003, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont

THE DRAMA OF LIFE

Miss Dixie L. Knapp, Marshalltown, Iowa

Life has been likened to a stage, and we all play a leading role in the most tremendous drama ever presented. Life is a three-act drama: Act I, we are born; Act II, we live; Act III, we die.

"We love, we laugh, we hate, we cry;
Just as we live, we also die."

This play is produced and directed by a hand more powerful than man's — the Hand of God.

This fabulous production has only one critic — our Maker. God will be the only judge of our performance — if we please Him we are rewarded and take a second bow; if not, we are doomed. It is fatal to be a "flop" in this play. There are no leading roles, as everyone is placed on an equal basis. A person's success in this play depends not upon his acting ability, but his ability to live his *one* life successfully.

This play consists of many different emotions: love, hate, anger, fear, disappointment, joy, anxiety. As life is a mystery to all humanity, it is hard to put one's finger on any one basic plot. This play is a drama, a mystery, a tragedy, and a comedy, all rolled into one. If we do not take our parts seriously, the play will be a three-act farce.

We who participate in this drama are all granted different talents; and we must cherish these talents and learn to use them to the best of our ability. There are no practices or dress rehearsals with this play, and its success will depend upon us, the performers. We will know of our own success in our part only when we hear God's approving applause. You have no lines to learn — just follow your heart. You will need prompting many times — those who love you will be your prompters.

There will be no final curtain with this play — until God wills it. Our parts will cease when we die, but there will be others to take our places and the production will go on. Remember that "Love is Power," and you will be a star performer.

WHO'LL BE THE NEXT?

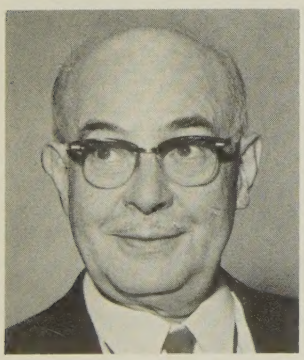
THE CONGREGATIONALIST invites all young people of Congregational Churches to submit essays or articles of any kind which show a similar attitude toward life, or which deal with the perplexing problems which youth faces in this age.

Pastors, advisers to youth groups, and parents are requested to call the attention of young people to this opportunity for them to express their thoughts and at the same time be helpful to other young people. Essays or articles submitted should not be over 500 words, and should be sent to The Editor, THE CONGREGATIONALIST, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts. Those which are judged to be suitable for publication will appear on the National Association Pilgrim Fellowship page from time to time, as space permits.

From the Office of Pastoral Relations

Rev. F. Willard Kime, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Since the establishment of the Department of Pastoral Relations at our Milwaukee office, we have had many letters from our Congregational ministers in every section of the country indicating their desire to change pastorates. Some desire a change because by prayerful searching of their souls they have come to the conclusion that the United Church is not the church of the New Testament pattern; that when the tinsel and gilded wrappings are removed, a church of pre-Reformation days appears in the offing; that no church can be half free and half slave, such as would develop when free churches and controlled churches gather together. When such occurs ecclesiastical "slavery" can be the only outcome.



Mr. Kime

We have many ministers available to churches desiring to remain Congregational and more are coming in weekly. Churches should never fear that we will not have dedicated Congregational ministers available, as has been told to many who have hesitated on approving the United Church Constitution. We offer the services of our Pastoral Relations Department to any Congregational Christian Church, whether or not a member of the National Association. There are no "strings" attached to our Christian service.

The Commission on the Ministry has many problems under consideration for the well-being of our ministry; especially the matters concerning "standing," licensure and ordination. These concerns which have been discussed since the organizing of our continuing Congregational fellowship, will soon be clearly proclaimed at an early date. One thing is certain, all such matters will be in accord with real Congregational practice and usage.

This office of Pastoral Relations is your office, use it to the fullest extent and every suggestion will be given earnest attention and consideration by our Commission on the Ministry.

From the Old Country

Rev. Albert D. Belden, D.D., London, England

My first word this time must be one of deep yet inexpressible thanks to all those many friends in the National Association who made me so wonderfully welcome and so thoroughly "at home" on my recent visit to America. It was a thrilling and joyous experience for me, never to be forgotten.

Now I find myself here again in the midst of a very heavy mixed program of preaching and lecturing round the gamut of modern problems, all of which seem so urgent that concentration on any one seems impossible.

For example, I find British Congregationalism, as I expected, plunged in the preliminary skirmishes to reshape itself toward a goal as yet a little remote but probably the United Church of Great Britain. Proposals are afoot to drop the term "Churches" in favor of the term "Church" and to drop the word "union" accordingly. In other words, "centralization" is on the way with easy assurances that the rights and liberties of the local Churches will not be injured in any way. Whoever said that "Hell is paved with good intentions" certainly "had something there", as you Americans describe it.

Whether the typical British genius for compromise can succeed in doing what American Congregationalism has failed to do, namely wed Christian Liberty to Authoritarianism, I do not know. The great phrase here is "Covenanted Relationship", which seems to me rather like a "sacred agreement to give up that awkward thing called Freedom, having made a last brave and painful free act of giving it up". Is this the best we can do to preserve the sacred heritage of Christian Liberty won for us by our martyred sires and which is the bulwark of the People's Liberty? Will someone tell me? How far we seem to be from Wordsworth's cry:

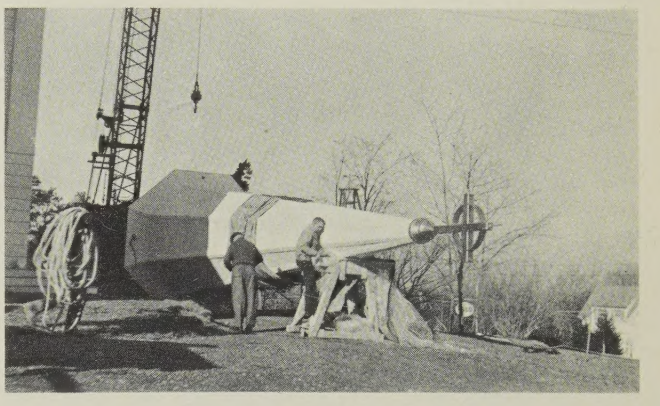
"We must be free or die
Who speak the language Shakespeare spoke;
The faith and morals hold that Milton held."

I hope to report further upon the state of British Congregationalism in my next contribution. Meanwhile let me stress the contention of my Maywood address, namely that freedom is basic to the gospel. Some of you remember the exegesis of Matthew 20: 22-28. Here Jesus, recognizing the crude ideas of the Kingdom of God held by His disciples, reads them a political lesson. "Not so," He says, "not so shall it be among you", uttering the biggest political negative of history.

Jesus thus wiped out all autocratic organization from Christian society or societies. Moreover, He binds up this democratic freedom with the redemption he comes to achieve for men. "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to *give His life* a ransom for *the many*." His cross is to redeem the life of the multitudes, the masses over which the lords and princes of the Gentiles love to exercise authority. Ever since that utterance and that Cross on Calvary the cause of the common people and their freedom has steadily increased on the earth. The emergence of Free Churches in Protestantism was a part of that sublime movement of history and Congregationalism is its advance guard, the hard-won area of Christendom where Freedom shines purest and best. Are we to surrender it?

NEW STEEPLE WITHSTANDS GALE

The new steeple for the First Congregational Church of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, replacing the one which came down in a northeast storm in January, 1958, was put in place on December 7, 1960. The cross and crown of this steeple are plastic overlaid with gold leaf, and should not need repairs for many years. The plans for the bell-tower, framing, steel reinforcing and steeple were drawn by the pastor, Rev. John A. Stevens.



Making Cape Cod History

Proof of the soundness of the work came before the steeple had been in place a week. On December 12 a 75 to 80 mile an hour gale swept up the coast, making storm window panes bend with its blasts, but the steeple held firm.

The accompanying photograph shows the cone being readied for hoisting to position. "Half the town was out with cameras," writes the pastor, "including a building committee from another Church. I guess we made Cape Cod history."

In Memoriam

Rev. Frank Weston Barber, 81, was killed when struck by a car while crossing a street in Milford, New Hampshire, on November 17, 1960. Mr. Barber had held pastorates in Warren, Connecticut, and Wilson, Connecticut, and had been in educational work before retiring to his native Hancock, New Hampshire, in 1956. Since his retirement he had served as senior deacon of the Hancock Church.

Mrs. Anne Elizabeth (McKichan) Gilroy, wife of Dr. William E. Gilroy, former Editor of THE CONGREGATIONALIST, died on December 19, 1960, after a long illness. Dr. and Mrs. Gilroy had made their home in Newton Centre, Massachusetts, for many years.

Mrs. Clarence F. Swift, widow of a Congregational minister, and herself a loyal Congregationalist, died in New York City on December 24. Although nearing her hundredth birthday, Mrs. Swift always had THE CONGREGATIONALIST read to her and was most appreciative of its contents.

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FROM THE LETTER BOX

Editor: THE CONGREGATIONALIST:

In your December issue you publish a letter from Mrs. Merrill Beale, taking exception to an editorial in the October issue of THE CONGREGATIONALIST. Mrs. Beale says that "every Congregationalist has the right to decide for himself whether he wants to be a member of the United Church of Christ or of the National Association," but that "both groups should carry on their campaign for membership on a basis of truth, not on misinformation as is true of your editorial." Publication of Mrs. Beale's letter is in itself a refutation of her charge that you are not concerned for the truth of the matter: it is in significant contrast with the editorial policies of the "official" publication of the General Council, which long ago closed its columns to all material opposed to the merger.

Mrs. Beale finds particularly misinforming the editorial statement about action on the proposed constitution of the United Church of Christ being "for keeps," and asks "What do you mean 'it's for keeps'?" The editorial itself answers the question, in direct context. Here is the statement: "There is no more 'wait and see'. It's for keeps! And what does that mean? It means that your Church can never again vote on a merger with another denomination. It means that your Church can never vote on amendments to the Constitution, even if such amendments should be of a kind to change the much quoted par. 21 which claims to guarantee freedom."

The editorial statement is so obviously in accordance with the fact that I was puzzled to understand Mrs. Beale's possible basis for challenging it so vigorously. Such basis as there is appears to be found in the statement in her letter that "every local Church will have as many direct votes on the amendment as they have delegates at the Conference meeting." In other words, to Mrs. Beale, a vote of a Congregational Christian Church in a matter going to the roots of its spiritual existence may be a "vote" of a delegate at a state Conference exercising not the advisory powers of today but definitive prerogatives. In the broad assumption that this would be a Congregational vote I would submit that Mrs. Beale is clearly in error. A Congregational Christian Church votes only as its members assemble in the manner prescribed by its own Constitution and ballot accordingly. This is the essence of Congregationalism.

The basic policy obviously contemplated for implementation by the Constitution of the United Church of Christ is summed up by the potently significant phrase "The local churches of the United Church of Christ have a God-given responsibility for that Church." Referring to the Constitution of the United States, Chief Justice Charles E. Hughes once said that the Constitution is "what the judges say it is." One may predict with considerable assurance that, invigorated by such a presumably inspired directive, the Constitution of the United Church of Christ will be "what the Synod says it is," and that in the process of holding the local churches to their allegedly "God-given responsibility", short shrift will be accorded to their autonomy.

Chicago, Illinois. PALMER D. EDMUNDS

NEWS NOTES

New Chancel at Manchester, Iowa. The renovated chancel of the Community Congregational Church of Manchester, Iowa, was dedicated at a special service on Sunday, December 4, 1960. Special gifts included a communion table, piano, pulpit Bible and three new choir pews.

Centennial at St. John's, Michigan. The one hundredth anniversary of the organization of the First Congregational Church, St. John's, Michigan, has been observed at special services during 1960. Several former pastors have preached on various Sundays. Extensive remodelling and renovation have taken place following a fire on January 20, 1960, which did extensive damage.

Anniversary of Christmas Eve Service. The first Christmas Eve service in a New England meeting house was conducted by Rev. Edwin Pond Parker in the South Church of Hartford on December 24, 1860. The centennial of this event was observed in the same edifice on Christmas Eve, 1960.

New Member Church. Lawndale Community Congregational Church, Lawndale, California, has voted to become a member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.

Ordination at Chicopee Falls. On December 7, 1960, an ordination service was held at the Congregational Church of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, following a vicinage council which had examined Joseph Simone, pastor of the Church. The ordination sermon was preached by Dr. Marion J. Bradshaw of Bangor, Maine, and the prayer of ordination was offered by Dr. Henry David Gray of Hartford, Connecticut.

Used Hymnals Available. One hundred twenty five Pilgrim Hymnals (edition of 1931) will be given to any Church which will provide for their transportation. Please apply to Rev. Floyd E. Terwilliger, Lisle, New York.

Pastoral Changes. Pilgrim Congregational Church, Coleridge, Nebraska, has called Mr. Robert F. Dralle, a Yankton College student, as pastor. . . . Rev. Arthur W. Tiffen, Tarentum, Pennsylvania, has been called to Frankfort, Michigan. . . . Rev. Robert S. Hess of Mt. Union, Pennsylvania (Baptist) has been called to the Village Congregational Church, Medway, Mass., and Rev. Henry G. Cooper, Director of Religious Education at First Unitarian Church, Worcester, Mass., to the pastorate of First Congregational Church, Adams, Mass.

To Contributors. Dr. Howell D. Davies urgently requests that in sending to the Continuation Committee and the Missionary Society, separate checks be made out. It complicates bookkeeping if gifts to both organizations are included in one check.

Our Cover Picture. Oceans of golden poppies in the foreground, with the snow-capped Sierra Nevada Mountains beyond, bring us a typical view of Southern California, where so many of our Continuing Congregationalists are active.